

Listing and Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (original) A protein interaction system comprising a plurality of bait fusion proteins, each fusion protein comprising (i) a first fragment of fluorescent protein, a first peptide of interest and a linker portion interposed between the first peptide and first fluorescent fragment; wherein the linker portions of each bait fusion protein are of different lengths, and the first peptide of interest of each bait fusion protein is identical to the first peptide of interest in each of the other bait fusion proteins,

and (ii) at least one prey fusion protein comprising a fragment of fluorescent protein complementary to said first fragment of fluorescent protein, a second peptide of interest and a second linker portion interposed between the complementary fragment and the second peptide;

wherein, on interaction of a first peptide of interest with a second peptide of interest, the fragments of the fluorescent protein functionally associate to promote fluorescence.

2. (currently amended) The protein interaction system as claimed in claim 1 or ~~claim 2~~ wherein the linker portions comprise in the range 5 to 100 amino acid residues.

3. (original) The protein interaction system as claimed in claim 2 wherein at least one linker portion comprises at least 20 amino acids.

4. (currently amended) The protein interaction system according to ~~claim 1 any one of claims 1 to 3~~, wherein the fragments of fluorescent protein are generatable through the introduction of a split point between the amino acids at positions 157 and 158, or ~~(in a second embodiment)~~ between the amino acids at positions 172 and 173 of the humanised form of Green Fluorescent Protein (SEQ ID NO 2).

5. (currently amended) The protein interaction system as claimed in claim 1 ~~any one of the preceding claims~~, wherein the system comprises a plurality of prey fusion proteins.
6. (original) The protein interaction system as claimed in claim 5 wherein the linker portions of at least two prey fusion proteins are of different lengths.
7. (currently amended) The protein interaction system as claimed in claim 5 ~~or 6~~ wherein at least two of the second peptides of interest of the prey fusion proteins are provided by different amino acid sequences.
8. (currently amended) The protein interaction system as claimed in claim 1, ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ wherein the first peptide is linked to the N terminus of the first fragment of fluorescent protein.
9. (currently amended) The protein interaction system as claimed in claim 1, ~~any one of claims 1 to 7~~ wherein the first peptide is linked to the C terminus of the first fragment of fluorescent protein.
10. (currently amended) The protein interaction system as claimed in claim 1, ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ wherein the second peptide is linked to the N terminus of the complementary fragment of fluorescent protein.
11. (currently amended) The protein interaction system as claimed in claim 1, ~~any one of claims 1 to 9~~ wherein the second peptide is linked to the C terminus of the complementary fragment of fluorescent protein.

12. (currently amended) The protein interaction system as claimed in claim 1, any one of the preceding claims further comprising at least a third fusion protein comprising at least a third fragment of fluorescent protein complementary to a first and / or second complementary fragment of fluorescent protein;

wherein said at least third fragment is linked to at least a third peptide of interest and at least a third linker is interposed between the at least third fragment and at least third peptide of interest wherein the at least third fragment of fluorescent protein is capable of functional association with a first and / or complementary fragment of fluorescent protein such that on functional association of said fragments fluorescence is enabled and on interaction of the first, second and third peptides of interest the fragments functionally complement each other to promote fluorescence.

13. (currently amended) A protein interaction system as claimed in claim 1, any one of the preceding claims wherein the system is a cell based system.

14. (original) A library of nucleic acid constructs comprising a plurality of nucleic acid constructs, each construct encoding

(i) a first fragment of fluorescent protein capable of functional association with a complementary fragment of fluorescent protein such that on functional association of said first and complementary fragments fluorescence is enabled,

(ii) a peptide of interest and

(iii) a linker portion interposed between the peptide and first fragment of fluorescent protein; wherein the peptide of interest encoded by each nucleic acid construct is the same and the linker portion encoded by each construct is of a different length to the linker encoded by each other construct.

15. (original) The library according to claim 14, wherein the linker portions comprise in the range 5 to 100 amino acid residues.

16. (currently amended) The library as claimed in claim 14 or ~~claim 15~~ wherein at least one linker portion comprises at least 20 amino acids.

17. (currently amended) The library according to ~~claim 14 any one of claims 14 to 16~~, wherein the fragments of fluorescent protein are generatable through the introduction of a split point between the amino acids at positions 157 and 158, or ~~(in a second embodiment)~~ between the amino acids at positions 172 and 173 of the humanised form of Green Fluorescent Protein (SEQ ID NO 2).

18. (currently amended) An expression vector comprising at least one of the plurality of nucleic acid constructs as defined in ~~claim~~ ~~claims 14 to 17~~, wherein the at least one nucleic acid construct encodes a fusion protein having a linker of at least 20 amino acids.

19. (currently amended) An expression vector comprising a plurality of nucleic acid constructs as defined in ~~any one of claims~~ ~~claim 14 to 17~~.

20. (original) The expression vector according to claim 19, wherein at least one nucleic acid construct encodes a fusion protein having a linker of at least 20 amino acids.

21. (currently amended) A cell transformed with a vector as claimed in ~~any one of claims~~ ~~claim 18 to 20~~.

22. (currently amended) A cell comprising a protein interaction system as claimed in ~~any one of claims~~ ~~claim 1 to 13~~.

23. (currently amended) The cell according to claim 22, wherein the cell is ~~transformed with a vector a-~~ cell according to claim 21 ~~18~~.

24. (currently amended) An assay method for monitoring peptide interaction comprising the steps of

- (i) providing the protein interaction system of ~~any one of claims~~ claim 1 to 13;
- (ii) allowing the bait fusion proteins to come into contact with the prey fusion protein(s); and
- (iii) measuring fluorescence produced by the interaction of a first and second peptide of interest causing fragments of the fluorescent protein to functionally interact.

25. (original) The assay method according to claim 24, wherein the assay is a cell-based assay.

26. (currently amended) The assay method according to claim 25, wherein the cell based assay is performed using one or more cells according to ~~claim 22 or claim 23~~.

27. (currently amended) The method according to claim 25 ~~or claim 26~~, wherein the assay further comprises the step of determining the subcellular location of the interaction of the first and second peptides of interest in the at least one cell.

28. (currently amended) The method according to ~~any one of claims~~ claim 24 to 27, wherein the assay further comprises the step of determining the length of the linker(s) of those fusion proteins which allow the first fragment and complementary fragment of the fluorescent protein to functionally complement each other and enable fluorescence to be detected on interaction of the first and second peptide of interest.

29. (currently amended) The method according to ~~any one of claims~~ claim 24 to 28, wherein the assay comprises the steps of:

providing a putative interaction modulating agent;

measuring the fluorescence produced in the presence of said putative modulating agent;

comparing the measured fluorescence in the presence of the putative modulating agent with the measured fluorescence in the absence of the putative modulating agent;

wherein a decrease in detection of fluorescence in the presence of the putative modulating agent relative to in the absence of the putative modulating agent is indicative that the putative modulating agent prevents or is an inhibitor of peptide interaction; and wherein an increase in detection of fluorescence in the presence of the putative modulating agent relative to in the absence of the putative modulating agent is indicative that the putative modulating agent promotes or enhances peptide interaction.

30. (currently amended) A kit comprising a library of nucleic acid constructs according to ~~any one of claims~~ claim 14 to 17 and means to express the constructs.

31. (original) The kit according to claim 30 which further includes at least one second nucleic acid construct which encodes a complementary fragment of fluorescent protein, a second peptide of interest and a second linker portion interposed between the complementary fragment and the second peptide of interest.

32. (original) The kit as claimed in claim 31 wherein the kit comprises a plurality of second nucleic acid constructs, wherein the second peptides of interest encoded by the plurality of second nucleic acid constructs are each of different amino acid sequence.